

Message Text

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60

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 AF-10 IO-14 ACDA-19 EA-11 DRC-01 /168 W

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R 221158Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1004

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 10384

BEIRUT POUCH BAGHDAD

E O 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS

SUBJECT: MRS MEIR ON MID EAST SITUATION

1. IN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED DEC 21 BY YEDIOT AHARONOT PRIMIN
MEIR MADE FOLLOWING POINTS.

2. WELL MEANING PEOPLE IN ISRAEL HAVE ILLUSION INTERNATIONAL
GUARANTEES OF MID EAST SETTLEMENT WOULD BE VALUABLE, BUT
ISRAEL MUST LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE. UNEF PRESENCE 1957-1967
DID NOT PREVENT CLOSING OF TIRAN, NOR DID SEATO GUARANTEES
HELP PAKISTAN. WHAT ISRAEL HAD AFTER 1956 WAR WAS CLOSE TO
SIGNED GUARANTEES. MANY IN US HAD ASKED MRS MEIR RECENTLY
IF SHE THOUGHT ISRAEL MIGHT ONE DAY NEED US TROOPS. WHEN
SHE ANSWERED THIS WOULD MEAN IN EFFECT ISRAEL HAD LOST WAR,
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INTERLOCUTORS, AWARE OF POST-VIETNAM US REALITIES, WERE

RELIEVED (I.E. THAT ISRAEL WOULD NEVER COUNT ON RECEIVING US TROOPS). CONTINUING, MRS MEIR SAID SOME PEOPLE IN ISRAEL DELUDE THEMSELVES INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES CAN REPLACE DEFENSIBLE BORDERS, AND EVEN ISRAEL'S FRIENDS PROPOSE THIS; BUT EXPERTISE ON ISRAEL'S DEFENSIBILITY WITHOUT TERRITORIAL DEPTH WAS INCORRECT.

3. TO ANOTHER QUESTION, SHE REPLIED ISRAEL COULD NOT MANAGE WITHOUT US AGAINST DIRECT SOVIET ATTACK. BUT BIG CHANGE IN US-USSR RELATIONS AND US-ISRAELI RELATIONS WOULD HAVE TO OCCUR BEFORE THIS COULD HAPPEN. IN OCTOBER WAR USSR BEGAN TO OVERSTEP PERMISSIBLE LINE AND FOUND OUT THIS WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE UNDER DETENTE.

4. MRS MEIR DISDAINED RUMORS IN ISRAEL THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER PREPARING TRAP FOR ISRAEL AT GENEVA, STRESSING SECRETARY IS RIGHTLY PURSUING US INTERESTS AND DESPITE OCCASIONAL DIFFERENCES WITH HIM, SHE KNEW HE WANTED ME PEACE. SHE HAD KNOWN HIM FOUR YEARS. AS FOR GENEVA MODALITIES, ISRAEL HAD GAINED AGREEMENT THAT, RE "PARTICIPATION OF OTHER GROUPS, A) ONLY AFTER GENERAL AGREEMENT, AND B) NO MENTION OF THE WORD PALESTINIANS." ISRAEL ALSO GAINED NON-PARTICIPATION BY SUCH COUNTRIES AS YUGOSLAVIA, FRANCE, AND BRITAIN. ASKED WHAT IF HUSSEIN SENDS PALESTINIAN DELEGATION, SHE REPLIED "ONE MUST DIFFERENTIATE. WE KNOW THAT MANY PALESTINIANS ARE JORDANIAN CITIZENS... BUT WITH TERRORISTS AND MURDERERS WE WILL NOT COMPROMISE." SHE DISMISSED IDEA HUSSEIN MIGHT INCLUDE FEDAYEEN IN HIS DELEGATION.

5. SYRIANS WERE EXPLOITING ISRAELI SENSITIVITIES OVER POWS. BREZHNEV IN OCTOBER PROMISED TO SECRETARY TO DO WHAT HE COULD ABOUT POWS, OF WHICH PRESIDENT LATER REMINDED HIM, TO WHICH SOVIETS REPLIED, WE TRIED AND DID NOT SUCCEED. "I WILL NOT SAY THEY PRESSED TO THE POINT OF ANGER, BUT THEY TRIED."

6. ASKED IF USSR WANTED GENEVA TO SUCCEED, MRS MEIR SAID USSR HAS GLOBAL INTERESTS FAR BROADER THAN ME. SOVIETS HAD FOUND THEY COULD ASSURE ME QUIET ONLY WITH US COOPERATION. THEY NOW HAVE ARAB SYMPATHY AND ARAB HARD CURRENCY FOR ARMS. SOVIETS WANT SUEZ CANAL REOPENED BECAUSE OF CHINA.

7. AN ISRAELI PREEMPTIVE STRIKE AT START OF OCTOBER WAR WOULD UNCLASSIFIED

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NOT NECESSARILY HAVE GIVEN ISRAEL MILITARY ADVANTAGE, AND IT WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN NO US AIRLIFT. EVEN BRITISH NOW SAID ISRAEL STARTED 1967 WAR.

8. IF MRS MEIR IS ISRAEL'S NEXT PRIMIN, SHE WILL SET UP A NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL AND ALSO A DEPT TO HANDLE ETHNIC GAP AND UNDERPRIVILEGED. "IT HAS BECOME CLEAR TO ME THAT THIS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN IN THE PAST."

KEATING

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